02166

1968/09/24

Tuesday, Sept. 24, 1968
4:15 p.m.

~~SECRET~~

MR. PRESIDENT:

Herewith the extract on Hanoi's intentions from the INR report to which Bunker refers in the cable I sent you.

W. W. Rostow

~~SECRET~~ attachment

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White House Guidelines, Feb. 24, 1983
By DG, NARA, Date 11-17-92

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Will Probably Grant Measure of Tacit Reciprocity. In order to maintain the talks, and to stop the rest of the bombing, Hanoi may be willing to resolve the reciprocity question. It probably hoped that its military pressure during the spring or the later "lull" would lead to a change in the American attitude. Neither has worked. The next stop is to try to persuade us to accept some limited gesture of tacit reciprocity, in one or another area of potential de-escalation. Hanoi's position may even have advanced to the point where it is prepared to be somewhat more explicit than before about the connection between an American bombing halt and the steps it is prepared to take. However, we do not believe Hanoi is yet prepared to issue a categorical assurance. Instead, it may give us a slightly better basis for an "assumption," hoping that we will accept this under the framework of the San Antonio formula.

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However, any such concession will almost certainly be accompanied by continued and perhaps intensified military and political pressure in South Vietnam. It may, in fact, be designed in part to forestall US reaction to such pressure. And, if Hanoi's move does produce the much-desired full bombing halt, it will not feel any urgency to yield its stiff position on the next matter to be discussed: the roles of the GVN and the NLF in negotiations. Heartened by our readiness to refer to the NLF in the official conversations, it might then believe that we will be prepared to accept direct discussions with the NLF to the exclusion of the GVN. It will certainly exert maximum pressures for direct US-NLF conversations before being prepared to review its position on that issue (e.g., by falling back on the "Alliance" and/or accepting some GVN role). And it will also probably reject any effort to discuss North Vietnamese troop presence in the South.

(Extract from Intelligence Note 744, Sept. 20, 1968, Dept of State, Dir. of Intelligence and Research)

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By ___, NARA, Date 6-17-94